

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Terry Goddard Presents Distinguished Service Awards to Victims' Rights Advocates**

(Phoenix, Ariz. – April 24, 2006) Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard today presented the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Awards to victims' rights advocates at the Victims' Rights Week Kick-Off Event at the State Capitol.

These awards were presented in recognition of exemplary service, uncommon commitment to victims' rights and to improving the treatment of crime victims.

**Attorney General's Distinguished Award for Leadership:** Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Ronald Reinstein.

Reinstein was recently named the chair of the Supreme Court's Commission on Victims in the Courts. This commission endeavors to address victims' rights issues and make recommendations to the Arizona Judicial Council.

Reinstein has been on the forefront of ensuring a fair balance of victims' rights with defendants' rights. In addition to his work on the new Supreme Court Commission, Reinstein has served as the Maricopa County Presiding Criminal Judge and is one of seven judges nationally to be asked to participate in the Judicial Education Project for the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Victims of Crime. The goal of this project is to develop a victims' rights training program that provides a better understanding of what victims endure during the criminal justice process.

**Attorney General's Distinguished Award for Service Coordination:** CARE 7, the City of Tempe's Crisis Response Team.

This program, which began in 1997, provides on-scene response to victims of crime and other trauma, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Police officers and firefighters on scene dispatch this mobile crisis unit through the emergency dispatch system. The program began as a weekend volunteer response team and has developed into a highly respected system that serves as a model for other agencies.

The CARE 7 team consists of professionally trained staff and volunteers who respond to crime scenes within 10 minutes. The team responds to an average of 100 calls a month, providing services such as information and referral services, emergency shelter, food, clothing and medications to victims of domestic violence and other crimes. The program also provides follow-up victim advocacy. In 2005, CARE 7 volunteers gave nearly 6,000 hours to the program, responded to more than 1,000 calls and assisted over 3,000 adults and children. Since its inception, the program has helped more than 15,000 victims.

**The Attorney General's Distinguished Award for Advocacy Direct Services:** Court Appointed Special Advocates of Arizona program (CASA).

CASA volunteers donate time and effort to ensure that the best interests of children in the dependency system are protected. CASA volunteers are assigned one case at a time, form a relationship with their assigned child or children and advocate for their needs. Volunteers from all walks of life take part in this program and sometimes become the most reliable person in a child's life during a critical time. In 2005 Arizona CASA volunteers donated 65,923 hours to their cases, providing a benefit of more than \$1 million to Arizona.

**Attorney General's Distinguished Award for Innovative Practices:** Pinal County Sheriff's Bureau of Volunteer Services Department.

In 2004, this department was created with a grant from the National Sheriff's Association and the U.S. Office of Victims of Crime. This volunteer unit delivers multi-faceted services to address the needs of victims and surviving family members. The program utilizes retired law enforcement personnel and citizen volunteers to provide such services as grief support at the scene of a traffic fatality and protective standbys when a defendant is allowed to return home to retrieve personal items following a protective order. This model helps prevent re-victimization and provides an opportunity for education regarding domestic violence issues.

This program also taps retired law enforcement individuals with extensive investigation experience to work on unsolved, homicide cases. Recent advances in DNA technology provide a fresh avenue for evidence to be re-examined. These volunteers maintain contact with families and update them on the investigation, providing assurance that the family and the victim are not forgotten. In 2005, this department provided 5,000 hours of volunteer time, talent and expertise to victims in Pinal County.

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